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Subject: Re: Friday Afternoon Puzzler

Posted by [Kenneth P. Bowman](#) on Fri, 12 Jun 2009 21:09:09 GMT

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In article <MPG.249c6dccba4246d098a6e1@news.giganews.com>,  
David Fanning <news@dfanning.com> wrote:

```
> Folks,  
>  
> If you've already had a beer, you may want to work  
> on this one. Should we be concerned? Or is this just  
> one more example for the Sky is Falling article?  
> I've voiced my opinion, but it didn't satisfy the  
> complainant. What say you?  
>  
> curly=[-1.912,-1.852,-1.386,-0.818,-0.343,-0.343,-1.233]  
> larry=[-1.912,-1.852,-1.386,-0.818,-0.343,-0.343,-1.233]  
> curly = curly*!PI/180.  
> larry *= !PI/180.  
> diff=curly-larry  
> print,diff  
>  
> Why aren't the first set of differences (where the assignment  
> is made with the *= operator) *exactly* zero?  
>  
> Cheers,  
>  
> David
```

My guess is that the compiler/interpreter does the multiplication and division operations in a different order in the two statements in the first case. The other two cases are syntactically identical, so the operations should be carried out in the same order.

\*Why\* the operations are done in a different order is the meta-question.

Ken Bowman

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